



The Home Page

First Presbyterian Church, Hastings, Nebraska 68901-5175
Vol. 20.45 December 25, 2016 – January 1, 2017



Santa Shop Wants to Give YOU Five!

A big "high five" goes out to all those who contributed items for Saturday's United Harvest "Santa Shop." Thanks to you, hundreds left the Annex with bright faces and happy hearts, eager--and able--to GIVE a Christmas gift to a loved one....and enjoying a special something for themselves, as well! Because of the generosity of our congregation, the Santa Shop was able to welcome every United Harvest recipient--children and adults alike--to Christmas shop for family members. As each guest entered the shop, he or she was lovingly embraced by one of the "navigator elves" (12 elementary-aged children), who carefully assisted each shopper in finding just the right gift(s). God's provision and presence seemed clear both to recipients and volunteers, as love and gratitude flowed through the shop, which seemed amazingly to have just the right number of items for all those in need.

Special thanks goes out to Colleen Schukei, Susan Meeske and Kaleena Fong who cast the vision for the Santa Shop. They spent many hours bringing it to fruition: sorting donations, "set decorating" the beautiful shop, and thinking through every last logistical detail. The Santa Shop was made possible because of the many volunteers but especially noted are Kili Wenburg, Laurie Lofquist, Wendy Gwennap,

Cheryl Schukei, Rogene Short, Amy Hermes, Leah Ratzlaff, Stephanie Bliss, Matt Fong, Susan Oliver, Andrew Gonzalez, Brady Rhodes, John Northrop and the WNL elementary kids.

With the glow of the Santa Shop still warm in our hearts, let us look ahead to next year's event! Organizers are ready even now to receive your early donations--especially donations of gift bags!! (Any and all gift bags will be received gladly and gratefully put to use).

Thank you again, to one and all who donated, volunteered, and/or prayed for this project. May God receive all the praise and honor for a truly meaningful day of giving and receiving in the name of the greatest gift of all: Christ.

“Thank you so much for investing in the future of our church by contributing to the Theological Education Fund (TEF). Your gift supports our Presbyterian seminaries in preparing future pastors, educators, chaplains, scholars, spiritual directors and other church leaders for lives of bold mission outreach: proclaiming the gospel and transforming lives through Spirit-filled ministry in the 21st century. May God continue to sustain and grow your endeavors in service to the Risen Christ! With Gratitude, The Rev. Dr. Lee Hinson-Hasty, Senior Director, Theological Education Funds Development”

“The Board of Directors, the volunteers and homeowners of the Hastings Area Habitat would like to thank you for your generous donation of (a combined) \$726.00. Your gift goes a long way in helping to fund the building of homes that provide safe, affordable housing to families in need. Thank you for your commitment to the Habitat philosophy of eliminating poverty and homelessness from the world by making decent shelter a matter of conscience and action. Thank you so very much! Sincerely, Patty Kneale, Board Member & Fundraiser Chairman, Hastings Area Habitat for Humanity”

Poinsettias may be purchased in the church office thru Thursday, December 22, and picked up after 10:30a.m. Service on Sunday, December 25. A list of those memorialized and honored will be published in the Christmas Eve Service bulletins.

Poinsettia Order Forms are on the glass shelf in front of the office and in the announcement section online at www.fpchastings.org.

The church pays \$7.50 each and donates the remaining \$7.50 each to Salvation Army’s Utility Assistance Program, a program that assists many in need in our community. Your contribution is greatly appreciated.

Deacons delivered 10 bags with a total of 72 items to the Hastings Food Pantry.

Join us for Christmas Eve candlelight service on Saturday, December 24th at 5:30p.m. and/or 7:30p.m., both with communion and opportunity for the Christmas Joy Offering.

Christmas Joy Offering

“Advent asks us to open our hearts to God’s love and grace, and you and your congregation have long responded faithfully to that call. By sharing God’s love through the Christmas Joy Offering with PC(USA) church workers and racial ethnic students in need, you embody what it means to be a connectional church. We ask that you again receive the CJO this Advent season, as the ministries it supports need your help. Wishing you every blessing this Advent and Christmas, The Reverend Peter C.S. Sime, Vice President, Assistance, Funds Development & CREDO”.

Join us for Christmas Day service: *“The Birthday Party for Jesus”* held in Fellowship Hall.

There will be NO nursery care on
December 25 or January 1.



Sunday School for all ages

is cancelled on Dec. 25 and on Jan.

1. Merry Christmas, and Happy New Year!

ATTENTION: Starting January 11, WNL will begin at 4:00pm for all Pre-K thru 5th Graders.

Wednesday Morning Bible@Breakfast is now on Christmas break. Study of *Living the Questions: The Wisdom of Progressive Christianity* will resume on Wednesday, January 4, at 7:00 a.m. in the Parlor. All are welcome to join in this lively group for interesting discussion over a shared meal.

"Soup Group" Returns in January With a Focus on Parenting

Every other Friday, 12-1 p.m. (beginning January 13), all are invited to gather in the Fellowship Hall for learning, conversation, good food, and encouraging friendships. Last Spring, the Soup Group functioned as a book discussion group. This season, however, there are no books to purchase and no reading with which to keep up. Each session will feature a time of fellowship over soup, a brief presentation on a topic related to parenting, and then conclude with discussion on the topic and prayer for the children of our church and our community. These sessions are particularly well-suited to adults with children, but all adults are invited, and a particular invitation is extended to those who have completed the "active parenting" phase of life: please come and share your perspectives and experience as a mentor to those with younger children!

Child care will be provided at no cost.

Coming Soon: *The Life-Changing Experiences of "The Chiapas Four"*

We prayed for them during their trip to Chiapas, Mexico. They toured the Mexico/Guatemala border, spent time with local families, learned about coffee farming, and had conversations with families affected by migration. Now you can hear all about the adventures and life-changing experiences of Denny Storer, Pam Lay, Jeni Howard, and Jan Ham, during the Forum on Sunday, January 15. Fellowship Hall, 9:15-10:15 a.m..

Taize Worship Returns January 8

*Bring a friend and join us the **first Sunday of each month at 7 p.m. in the Parlor!**

Taize Testimonial: "Do you ever notice that it never seems quite enough to pray during Sunday morning worship? Taize services are a time for prayer and chant-like music--but the setting is more muted and personal. Without a doubt, our devotional time for reflection during a Taize service seems deeper. For me, these prayers to God can feel somewhat ethereal, yet more purposeful and connected to the Almighty." --Byron Jensen

Hands Around the World Store (HAWS) will *not* be open Christmas Day. Bags of fresh roasted beans will be available in the church office during regular office hours on Thursday and Friday, December 22 and 23.

HAWS regular store hours 9 a.m.-12 noon will resume on New Year's Day. Feel free to browse the fine selection of fair trade coffee, chocolate, textiles and jewelry. Items come from nonprofit, fair trade organizations dedicated to lifting disadvantaged artisans and farmers and their families out of poverty. Your purchases make a difference!



**American
Red Cross**

The next **Red Cross Blood Drive** in Fellowship Hall will be on Tuesday, January 3rd from 12 noon to 6 p.m. For more information, or to make an appointment, contact Erica Brooks at ericalynn128@gmail.com or 402-469-9285.

Taking Down the Greens will be on Saturday, January 7. Volunteers are always appreciated; everyone is welcome to help.

Presbyterian Women will meet again February 1st (they will not meet in January).

Learning to Listen... Resting in Silence...



Contemplative Prayer

Forum and **Retreat**

“The closer one approaches to God, the simpler one becomes.”
—St. Teresa of Avila

Contemplative prayer is the opening of mind and heart—our whole being—to God, the Ultimate Mystery, beyond thoughts, words, and emotions.

Forum

January 8, 2017

Led by Dan Deffenbaugh, Hastings College professor of religion.

Dan will offer an introduction to contemplative prayer, perfect for those considering the March retreat, and also perfect for those interested in learning to listen to God and rest in silence.

Fellowship Hall, 9:15-10:15

Retreat

March 10-12, 2017

Friday, 7:30 p.m. - Sunday after lunch
St. Benedict Retreat Center, Schuyler, NE

This retreat, involving breath practice, is for beginners on the contemplative way, as well as for those who have some experience with it.

Led by Fr. Thomas Leitner, OSB, administrator of the St. Benedict Center. Fr. Thomas has practiced contemplative prayer for over 35 years.

**The retreat fills quickly. FPC has a few spots reserved. Contact Kili to sign up.

CONGREGATIONAL LIVES

Need a ride to church on Sundays? Request a ride by calling the church office or Deacon Moderator Jan Ham at 402-301-9081.

The radio broadcast airs Sunday @ 10:30a.m. during service on KICS 1550 AM.

Sunday's service will be broadcast on Channel 181 Tuesday, 1:00 p.m., and Sunday at 9:00 a.m.

Sunday, Jan 1, 2016
New Year's Day
10:30a.m. Worship
Message by Pastor Don Canady

For those living at Good Samaritan Village, Sunday's service will be broadcast on Channel 3 on Sunday at 12:00 noon and on Tuesday at 9:00 a.m.

"Thank you to everyone who's supported us over the years! We will miss all of you but look forward to seeing everyone when we're back in town visiting. –Sarah Fruehling"

"Thank you for the cards, sweets, and other lovely holiday sentiments. Your kindness serves as gracious reminders that we have so much to be thankful for! May your Christmas be filled with abundant love and joy, and the Spirit be with you now, throughout the season, and for years to come. Merry Christmas. –Tarci Matthews"

Please pray for Art Langvardt and his family as Art battles cancer.

Please pray for members of our PNC: Jim Duval, Chad Murrell, Mike Karloff, Joan Shaw, Chris Junker, Pam Lay, and Jeni Howard.

Zach Spurgeon's mailing address is: 67 Collins St., Unit B, Dubuque, IA 52001.

The office will be closed Monday, December 26, and Monday, January 2. Merry Christmas and God bless.

Due to the holidays, the **Home Page** will *not* be published next week but will resume with the January 8th edition.

COMMITTEE NEWS

Reminder to all committee members: Year-end reports will be due in January for the Annual Report.

2017 Directory is scheduled to be published the first week in January. Please email or call the office with any corrections to your listing that have not already been noted.

A big **thank you** to all committee members who served in 2016! Your service with due diligence is greatly appreciated!

*"When working with your attorney to update your **will and estate plan**, please consider including a gift to the First Presbyterian Church Foundation that will enhance the work of this congregation for many years to come. Our Federal Identification Number is 47-0710307. –Roger Doerr, Moderator of the Foundation"*

2017 "Box Sets"
(numbered and dated offering envelopes stored in a decorative little box) are now available in the office to any member who would like one.

Home Page

First Presbyterian Church

621 North Lincoln Avenue

Hastings, NE 68901

402-462-5147, fax 402-462-6818

Email: fpc@fpchastings.org

Website: www.fpchastings.org

Address Service Requested

The Home Page

A publication of
First Presbyterian Church
621 N. Lincoln Ave.
Hastings, NE 68901

Temporary Supply Pastor: Don Canady

Publishing Guidelines: The *Home Page* is a weekly publication (bi-weekly June & July) for the people and mission of First Presbyterian Church.

The newsletter seeks to inform, instruct and challenge its readers to become engaged in the ministry of FPC.

Articles will be accepted by Friday of each week. Submissions may be edited for length and suitability. You may send articles to the church office: tarci@fpchastings.org or call 402-462-5147.

Financial Corner

December 11, 2016

10:30 Worship Attendance	229
General Fund	\$16115.00
Plate Collections	\$78.00
Per capita (2016)	\$59.60
Per capita (2017)	\$140.50
Communion-Maryland Living	\$50.00
PC (USA) Hunger Fund	\$36.00
Food Pantry	\$6.00
Church Usage	\$65.00
Annex Bldg Use	\$555.00
Postage / Utilities	\$105.00

Thanks be to God!

And God is able to provide you with every blessing in abundance, so that by always having enough of everything, you may share abundantly in every good work.

-2 Corinthians 9:8